...CHANGE YOUR MIND YET?
OH, UM. I DON'T KNOW.
I THINK I'LL RESEARCH IT THOROUGHLY BEFORE TRYING, NOW.
...AND SEND ASSASSINS AFTER WHOEVER TAKES MY PICTURE, SO THAT IT DOESN'T END UP ON THE WEB.
I LIKE THAT PLAN.
HEE
AWKWARD PAUSE

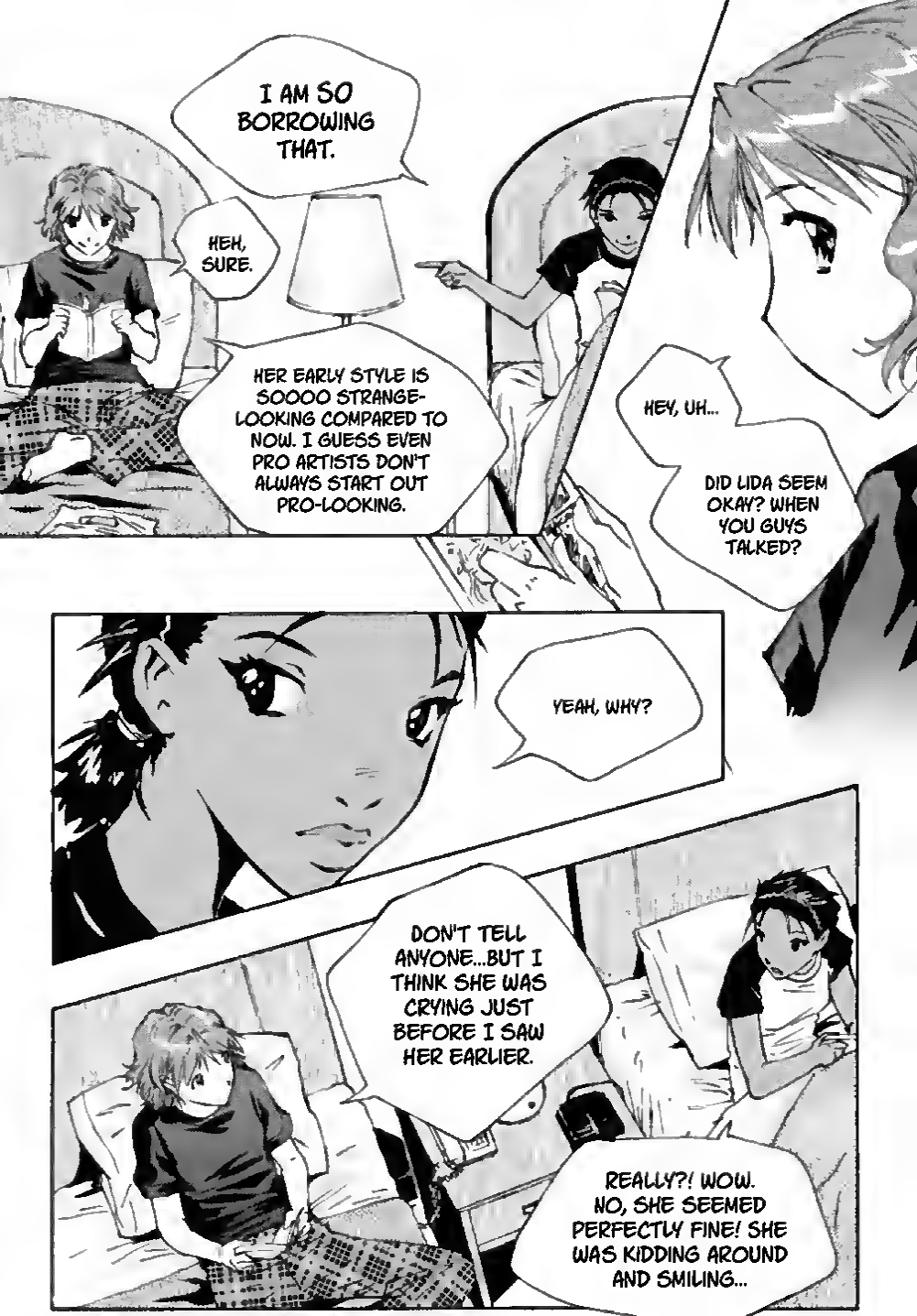
SO, UM! A GIRLFRIEND, HUH?
BAD TOPIC. BAD TOPIC.
BONK
GAAAH...
YEAH, SEEM TO HAVE GROWN ONE LATELY. GO FIGURE.
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WELL, NO GIRLFRIENDS, BUT I DID GO THROUGH A FEW BOYFRIENDS AFTER I RECOVERED FROM...YOU KNOW.
A FEW BOYFRIENDS?
EXACTLY HOW FEW?
WEEEELL, FIRST THERE WAS JEREMY...

CHRISTIE EXPLAINS
SO DON'T NEED TO LISTEN TO THAT SUCH IRRESPONSIBLE FRIVOLITY! AT LEAST SHE DIDN'T SLEEP WITH ANY OF THEM...
feels dirty
...AND BILL. THAT WAS THE SHORTEST--THREE DATES IN, AND HE STARTED TALKING ABOUT HOW LONG WE SHOULD BE ENGAGED BEFORE GETTING MARRIED, HOW MANY CHILDREN WE'D HAVE...
HE EVEN CHANGED HIS CELL RINGTONE TO MATCH MINE!
WHICH WOULD'VE BEEN CUTE, IF IT WASN'T SO CREEPY.
.....
WHAAAAT?
NOTHING. JUST... THAT'S A LOT OF BOYFRIENDS FOR ONE YEAR.
YEAH, WELL.
NONE OF THEM WERE YOU, SO...
...!
HAD A NICE BATH?
VOICE CONTROLS

SLAM!
I GOTTA GO.
.....

MUCH LATER THAT EVENING.
DAYLODGE
AAUGH!!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I JUST BLURTED IT OUT LIKE THAT!!
YES, YES, SO YOU'VE SAID. AT LEAST TEN TIMES THIS EVENING.
HOW CAN I FACE HIM NOW?! I PROMISED SANDRA I'D COME BY... AND I WANT THE KITTY HAT...
IS IT TO REPLACE THE ONE YOU LOST?
I DIDN'T LOSE IT! I JUST CAN'T FIND IT--THERE IS A DIFFERENCE.
AH. RIGHT.

HEY, IS THAT THE STUFF YOU BOUGHT? WHAT'S THE HAUL?
NOT A LOT TODAY...I SAW WAY MORE STUFF THAT I WANTED...YOU SAID THE DEALS ARE ON SUNDAY, RIGHT?
YEP!
THERE'S A *WOLF'S REIGN* ARTBOOK THAT I REALLY WANT, BUT IT'S 50 BUCKS!
WELL, JUST BE CAREFUL--SOMETIMES THEY SELL OUT OF THINGS BY SUNDAY.
!
I'LL BUY IT TOMORROW MORNING.
AND WHAT DID YOU GET?
OH GOD, WHAT DIDN'T I GET?!
I FINALLY FOUND THE *HALF-METAL ALCHEMIST* AND *FRUITY BASKET* VOLUMES I'M MISSING! A BUNCH OF HOSAMU TETZUKA STUFF, TOO. BUT THE BEST FIND EVER?
DIG DIG
LIDA'S *NIGHTBLOOM*. I'LL TRY TO GET HER TO SIGN IT WHEN WE GO TO THE REVIEW.


I AM SO BORROWING THAT.
HEH, SURE.
HER EARLY STYLE IS SOOOO STRANGE-LOOKING COMPARED TO NOW. I GUESS EVEN PRO ARTISTS DON'T ALWAYS START OUT PRO-LOOKING.
HEY, UH...
DID LIDA SEEM OKAY? WHEN YOU GUYS TALKED?
YEAH, WHY?
DON'T TELL ANYONE...BUT I THINK SHE WAS CRYING JUST BEFORE I SAW HER EARLIER.
REALLY?! WOW. NO, SHE SEEMED PERFECTLY FINE! SHE WAS KIDDING AROUND AND SMILING...

I WONDER IF SHE PUTS A FACE ON FOR THE FANS. I HOPE SHE'S OKAY...
WELL, WHEN WE SEE HER WE CAN BE EXTRA CHEERFUL AND NICE, AS MORAL SUPPORT OR SOMETHING.
YEAH.
OH MAN, CAN YOU IMAGINE IF OUR BOOK GOT PICKED UP?
YEAH!
WHEN, TOMORROW?
YOU'RE CHANNELING SOME BAD SHOJO, HERE--STUFF LIKE THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN IN REAL LIFE.
OH, PFFT! THE MINITOKYO WEBCOMIC GOT PICKED UP--WHY NOT US?
AND LIDA WROTE THAT HER FIRST BOOK CONTRACT WAS FROM A MINI-COMIC SHE WAS SELLING AT A CON! IT'S ALL ABOUT BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME!
...
WEEELL. IF IT'S POSSIBLE. IT WOULD BE PRETTY COOL.
WOULDN'T IT THOUGH?! *WARY CITY* ON THE SHELF IN EVERY BOOKSTORE IN AMERICA! AND OUR NAMES ON THERE!!

...
EH? EH?
BET IT'D MAKE YOUR MOM TAKE THIS A BIT LITTLE MORE SERIOUSLY, HUH?
...MAYBE.
MAYBE?!
FLUFF FLUFF
YOUR ART!! IN EVERY BOOKSTORE IN AMERICA!! SHE'LL HAVE TO BE IMPRESSED! AND YOU COULD DRAW COMICS INSTEAD OF GOING TO SOME STUPID LAW SCHOOL!
ARRGH, YOU'RE MAKING ME GET MY HOPES UP!!
BUT JUST THINK...
NOT ANOTHER WORD.

GOOD NIGHT.
CLICK
EVERY.. BOOKSTORE..
CHRISS. I HAVE PILLOWS, AND I AM NOT AFRAID TO USE THEM.
...
IN AMERICA...
ARRGH!! THAT'S IT!! YOU ASKED FOR IT!!!
hss hss hss!!!

...HOW WAS IT MY FAULT FOR NOT SETTING THE ALARM?!
BECAUSE YOU'RE THE ONE WITH SENSE!! WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY!
OH! THERE'S OUR TABLE!
STRANGLING GESTURES
YOU GUYS ARE LATE!
YEAH, WE OVERSLEPT... WOW, YOU'VE GOT A NEW OUTFIT TODAY!
HEY, WHERE ARE OUR CHAIRS?

DID YOU TAKE OUR CHAIRS?
WHAT? NO!
WELL, YOU ONLY HAD THREE YESTERDAY, AND NOW YOU HAVE FIVE.
WE GOT THEM AT THE CON OFFICE.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO YOURS, AND I SURE AS HELL HOPE YOU'RE NOT IMPLYING THAT WE STOLE THEM.
.....!
...DID YOU SEE WHO..?
I DIDN'T SEE, SORRY. WE GOT HERE LATE, TOO.
I'LL GO AND TRY TO FIND A COUPLE--GET STARTED ON THE SETUP, OKAY?
OKAY.

HA
HA
HA
HA
AND MY UNCLE'S LIKE, "WHAT'S THIS YAOI? SOUNDS LIKE SOME KINDA FOOD."
HEY.
YOU'RE CHRISTIE, RIGHT?
WE NEED TO TALK.

CHAPTER 5

OVER HERE.
OKAY, WHAT'S YOUR BUSINESS WITH MATT?
...UH. ...WHAT?
HE GOT ALL WEIRD WHEN YOUR NAME WAS MENTIONED-- ARE YOU HIS EX OR SOMETHING?
WHAT?! NO! WE...
HOW COME YOU'RE ASKING ME?
SO WHAT'S GOING ON?
SO HE JUST... DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING?
NADA. SO SPILL.
HE SAID THAT THIS ONE'S NOT HIS TO TELL.

WELL, IT'S KIND OF PERSONAL.
WHAT, DID YOU SLEEP WITH HIM?
WHAT?!! NO!
VOOM
WHAT'S WITH THE SHOCK? YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH HIS EYE? HE NOT GOOD ENOUGH?
THAT'S NOT...!
I WASN'T...!
...I BARELY KNEW HIM!!!
...
NOT THE TRAMPY TYPE, THEN? GOOD FOR YOU.
PAT PAT
CONVERSATION WEIRD-O-METER
TWEET
TWEET
NO OFFENSE ...
...BUT THAT WAS AN EXTREMELY UNPLEASANT LINE OF QUESTIONING!

IT WAS? SORRY, I HAVE A TENDENCY TO JUST GET TO THE POINT. NOT THAT GOOD AT TACT AND CRAP.
COUGH perfect match *COUGH*
HMPF. HMPF HMPF.
HMPF HMPF HMPF!
WHAT WAS THAT?
NOTHING! J-JUST A DRY THROAT!
YOU KNOW... HE'S A HARD GUY TO BE WITH.
...O-OH?
I MEAN, HE'S SOOO GOOD AT ANALYZING PEOPLE, SO GOOD. HE COULD GO ON FOREVER TALKING ABOUT IT, TOO. BUT AS SOON AS IT'S HIS TURN?
HE SHUTS UP. WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR 3 MONTHS AND I STILL KNOW NEXT TO NOTHING ABOUT HIM. AND ASKING IS LIKE TALKING TO A WALL.

ME, I'M PRETTY MUCH OUT THERE ALL OVER MY SLEEVE. BUT HIM?
I HAVE TO ASK HIS SISTER, HIS SISTER! JUST TO FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF MOVIES HE LIKES, SO THAT WE DON'T FIGHT SO MUCH ABOUT IT.
HOW COME YOU'RE WITH HIM, THEN? I-I MEAN, IF HE ANNOYS YOU SO MUCH.
...
I'VE NEVER...
...HAD SOMETHING LIKE THAT BEFORE.
IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN. HE FEELS...REAL, YOU KNOW?
WHEN HE SMILES... I FEEL LIKE THE GROUND'S FALLING OUT FROM UNDERNEATH ME.

...THOUGH I GOTTA TELL YOU--ONE GOOD THING ABOUT FIGHTING ALL THE TIME? A LOT OF MAKING UP. A LOT OF GOOD MAKING UP.
I SO DIDN'T NEED TO KNOW THAT.
SO WHY'S HE ALL WEIRD ABOUT YOU? I PROMISE I WON'T TELL ANYONE.
COUGH
WELL, SHE DID JUST SHARE PERSONAL STUFF, TOO...
UM. MY BOYFRIEND GOT VIOLENT AND TRIED TO, UH...
WELL...
THERE WAS UNPLEASANTNESS. MATT FOUGHT HIM OFF AND SANDRA LET ME STAY IN THEIR ROOM.
SO YOU DID SLEE...
K R K
I DIDN'T SLEEP WITH HIM, OH MY GOD!!!
HE WAS A GENTLEMAN AND TOOK THE FLOOR!
SO YOU'RE NOT ANY SORT OF BAGGAGE HE'S CARRYING?
WELL... HE DIDN'T TELL ME ANYTHING, SO I DOUBT IT.
not exactly a lie
WE'RE JUST KIND OF... FRIENDS, I GUESS.

OH, GOOD.
WELL, THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO KNOW. THANKS, SEE YA!
UM... BYE.
.....
CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE HOW YOU DIDN'T MENTION THE KISS.
I CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE HOW YOU'RE STUPID
THUMP
THUMP
I WAS AFRAID SHE'D BURY ME RIGHT THERE AND THEN IF I TOLD HER.
I'M SURE SHE WOULD'VE UNDERSTOOD!
...YEAH, AND PLANTED FLOWERS ON THE GRAVE AS AN APOLOGY?
CHRISS?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?
LYING THROUGH MY TEETH TO MATT'S GIRLFRIEND!
WHOA, SHE CAME BY? WHAT'D SHE WANT?

READING ON THE JOB?

HEY, YOU'RE BACK!!
THE PANEL RAN OVERTIME-- SORRY I'M LATE. HOW'S IT BEEN HERE?
WE SOLD 4 BOOKS AND 2 PRINTS!! AND A COUPLE OF PEOPLE FROM OUR MESSAGE BOARD CAME BY!
OH, SWEET!
HOW WAS THE PANEL?
...EWWW.
STAR◆PIZZA
EEWW?
UGH! GROSS...

I GUESS THE NEIGHBORS HAD A PARTY. DO YOU HAVE TISSUES?
SHF
YEAH, JUST A SEC.
HEY, LET'S SWITCH SPOTS-- I CAN...
IT'S OKAY. THANKS, THOUGH. I'LL JUST WATCH MY STEP.
GR ROWL
SMACK
...AWWW, WAS THAT LOVE FOR THE TRASH PILE? WHICH PART--THE SLIMY PIZZA OR THE CRUSTY FRIES?
QUIET, YOU!
IT'S MY TURN TO ROAM, SO I'M GOING TO MAKE A FOOD RUN ON THE WAY BACK. WANT ANYTHING?
ANYTHING WITH CHICKEN IS GOOD.

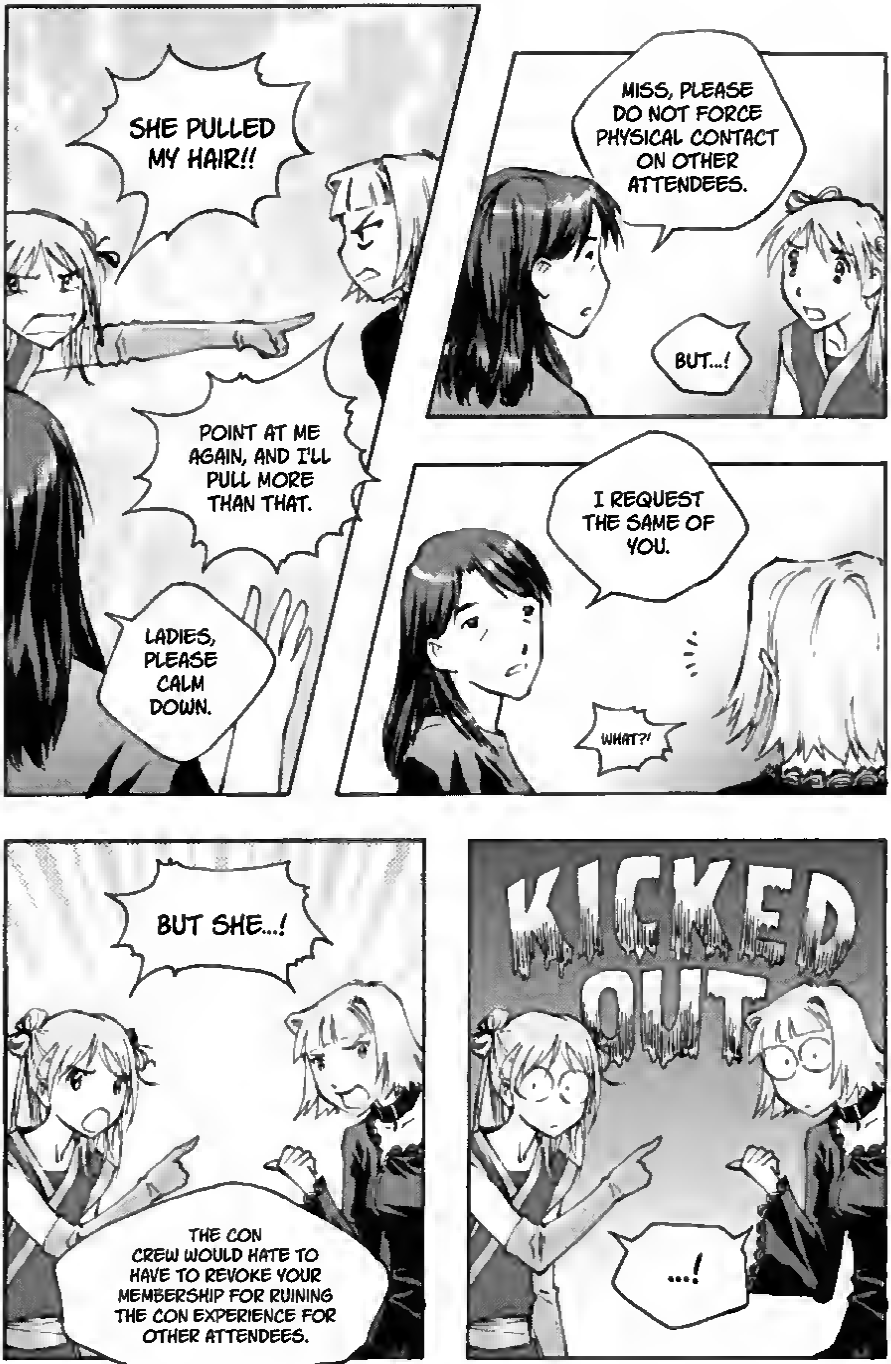
98
OKAY— CHECK THAT HE'S NOT THERE, SAY HI TO SANDRA, GET KITTY HAT, THEN AVOID THEM FOR REST OF CON.
AND IF HE IS THERE?
...LEAVE WITHOUT KITTY HAT AND AVOID THEM FOR REST OF CON.
SO GLAD WE ALL AGREE. FOR ONCE
D'elusion
GOT YAOI?
AH!
OH GOOD, HE'S NOT THERE...

HIYA!
HEY, YOU CAME!!
YEAH, I'M MAKING A FOOD RUN FOR OUR TABLE-- THOUGHT I'D DROP BY AND GET MY KITTY HAT.
OH, A FOOD RUN--WE SHOULD DO THAT TOO!! IT'S BEEN SO BUSY TODAY, BARELY ANY TIME TO BREATHE!
WELL, UH, I COULD PICK UP SOME STUFF FOR YOU AS WELL, IF YOU WA--
EXCELLENT IDEA!
I'LL SEND MATT AND EMILY WITH YOU TO HELP CARRY STUFF.
FLIP!
BEEP BEEP BEEP
ACK!!
..YEAH, MATT? WHERE ARE YOU GUYS?
NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED. NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED..

OKAY, THEY'RE JUST A COUPLE AISLES OVER THAT-A-WAY--LOOK FOR A GOTH-LOLI BOOTH.
I'LL KEEP THE HAT HOSTAGE, SO MAKE SURE TO COME BACK WITH THAT FOOD!!
HA HA, SURE!
IS SHE DOING THIS ON PURPOSE??
WAS CONSIDERING RUNNING OFF.
OKAY, TWO AISLES OVER...
LOOKING FOR GOTH-LOLI BOOTH...
NOT SEEING A GOTH-LOLI BOOTH...
OH PLEASE, GOD, LET ME BE LOST AGAIN...
HEEEEEY!! OVER HERE!
OH, HI!
...I HATE YOU, LIFE.

SO WHERE ARE WE GOING?
I WAS THINKING MBQ--IT'S CLOSEST AND CHEAPEST.
...AND GROSSEST! IS THERE ANY PLACE ELSE?
I WANTED A BURGER..
I GUESS THERE'S ALWAYS TACO HUT--THAT'S A FEW...
AIIIIEEE, IT'S SHIHO-KUN!!!
GLOMP
CAN I TAKE A PICTURE, PLEASE PLEASE PLEEEEEEZE?
WHAT THE HELL?!
GET OFF ME.
HEY, GET OFF HIM!!

WHAT THE HELL'S YOUR PROBLEM??!!
ARE YOU CRAZY?!
LET HER GO!!
WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM?? WHO SAID YOU CAN JUST GRAB RANDOM PEOPLE??!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
STAFF
THIS CRAZY BITCH ATTACKED MY BOYFRIEND!
I JUST HUGGED HIM!
NO SHE DIDN'T-- SHE TOTALLY JUMPED ON HIM.
IT'S CALLED A 'GLOMP' AND IT'S PERFECTLY LEGAL!!
SIR, ARE YOU HURT?
EH?.. EH?..
SIR
JUST MY DIGNITY. I'M FINE.


SHE PULLED MY HAIR!!
POINT AT ME AGAIN, AND I'LL PULL MORE THAN THAT.
LADIES, PLEASE CALM DOWN.
MISS, PLEASE DO NOT FORCE PHYSICAL CONTACT ON OTHER ATTENDEES.
BUT...!
I REQUEST THE SAME OF YOU.
WHAT?!
BUT SHE...!
THE CON CREW WOULD HATE TO HAVE TO REVOKE YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR RUINING THE CON EXPERIENCE FOR OTHER ATTENDEES.
KICKED OUT
...!

LET'S TRY AND KEEP THIS FUN FOR EVERYONE, OKAY?
COME ON, LET'S GO.
GRR.
THIS IS SO GOING IN MY BLOG!
STAFF
...
...A TRUCK OF TYLENOL WOULD BE SO GOOD RIGHT ABOUT NOW.
THERE BETTER BE DRINKING TONIGHT..
...UM, DON'T YOU THINK THAT WAS A LITTLE...
CAN YOU BE-LIEVE THAT STAFFER?!
I MEAN, WHAT IS IT-- THAT TWIT ASSAULTS SOMEONE, AND ALL SHE GETS IS A TALKING-TO? AND SHE THREATENS ME FOR DEFENDING MY BOYFRIEND?!

WELL, UM...
MATT?
OH DID SHE? SORRY, DIDN'T NOTICE. I WAS TOO BUSY BEING A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS
..
MATT MATT MAAAATT!... ARE YOU ANGRY AT ME?
I'M REALLY SORRY... YOU KNOW I DON'T HANDLE PEOPLE LIKE THAT VERY WELL.
..AND IT'S PARTLY YOUR FAULT, TOO--YOU DIDN'T WARN ME PEOPLE HERE COSPLAYED AS SINGLE DIGIT I.Q's.
UM, OUCH.
IS THAT A SEPARATE CATEGORY IN THE MASQUERADE BY ANY CHANCE?
SMRK
I SAW THAT!! THAT WAS A SMILE!

IF YOU WANT, YOU CAN BE A MANLY MAN AND BUY MY LUNCH.
=CHUCKLE=
I'M STARTING TO THINK YOU PLANNED THIS.
I AM SHOCKED AND APPALLED! I WOULD MOST CERTAINLY NEVER!
...
WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

...THAT.
...HUH?
GIRL, YOU NEED TO GET YOUR EARS CHECKED! I SAID I'M SORRY YOU HAD TO SEE THAT.
...O-OH. IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'M GLAD YOU GUYS WORKED IT OUT.
AND I'M DOUBLE GLAD IT DIDN'T INVOLVE ANY BROKEN LIMBS.
HA HA! THIS TIME, ANYWAY! THE DAY IS STILL YOUNG!
HEH. DON'T SCARE HER.

HEY, I THINK YOU GOT A CUSTOMER.
OH, HELLO!
ARE YOU THE ARTIST FOR THIS?
YES I AM!
I'M MARK TREVITT, AN EDITOR OVER AT MANGAPOP.
...
LIDA POINTED ME HERE, SAID YOU HAVE GOOD STUFF. MAN, WAS SHE EVER RIGHT.

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU MORE. ARE YOU GOING TO THE PORTFOLIO REVIEWS?
OH, NO, NO, JUST ME--I MEANT MY WRITER!
SHE'S GETTING FOOD RIGHT NOW, BUT SHE'LL BE AT THE REVIEWS!
YES! YES WE ARE!
WE? THERE'S MORE THAN ONE ARTIST ON THE TEAM?
...OH.
WELL, I GUESS SHE COULD TAG ALONG... BUT I SHOULD MENTION--WE'RE NOT REALLY LOOKING FOR WRITERS RIGHT NOW.
YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND...I HAVE A BOOK YOU'D BE PERFECT FOR.
HERE, TAKE MY CARD.

...WITH A MAJOR IN ENGLISH AND A MINOR IN CULTURAL STUDIES--THEY HAVE REALLY GOOD PROGRAMS FOR BOTH.
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO CREATIVE WRITING ESPECIALLY.
WELL, FIGURES YOU'D LIKE THAT, BEING A WRITER, HUH?
YEAH.
SO HOW DID YOU TWO HOOK UP?
WE WERE IN THE SAME KARATE CLASS.
HE WAS HOLDING BACK WHEN SPARRING WITH ME, SO I ALMOST BROKE HIS RIB.
IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT. RIGHT, MATT?
YOUR TURN TO ORDER.

AH! OKAY, LET'S SEE...
DO YOU HAVE ANY SALADS?

THERE IS NOTHING TO SAY.
STANDING SO CLOSE...
WE MIGHT AS WELL BE MILES APART.
...MATT?

MATT!
SORRY, WHAT?
I NEED YOUR WALLET--YOU SAID YOU'D PAY FOR THIS?
OH YEAH. HANG ON.
BUMP
WHOA, HEY!
...!
AW, NO WAY!!

OH MAN, I'M SORRY...
YOU'RE SOR-- I WAS GONNA BE IN THE MASQUERADE TONIGHT!! TOOK ME FOREVER TO MAKE THIS!!
WELL, I DON'T HAVE A SPARE COSTUME IN MY POCKET, SO YOU'LL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR 'SORRY.' THIS WAS AN ACCIDENT.
AN ACCIDENT?! I WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU! MAN, I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!
DON'T EVEN APOLOGIZE TO HIM, MATT. THIS WAS TOTALLY HIS FAULT.
THE HELL IT WAS!
WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING NEXT TIME!
I WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM!!
WELL MAYBE HE COULDN'T SEE YOU!
WELL MAYBE HE SHOULD TAKE HIS @#$%ING SHADES OFF INSIDE, HUH?!
WELL MAYBE HE HAS A GOOD REASON NOT TO, HUH?!
AWWW, I'M SORRY, DOES COMMON COURTESY CRAMP HIS STYLE OR SOMETHING?!

...
...
OH. OH SH...
WHOA.

THE CIRCUS IS IN TOWN ALL WEEKEND.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD SELL TICKETS.
DID YOU SEE THAT?
MURMUR
THAT WASN'T MAKE-UP?
DUDE'S GOT ONE EYE.
WHISPER
I COULDN'T REALLY SEE
AH!
UM!
WHISPER
ARGH, STUPID, STUPID!! DAMMIT!
EXCUSE ME, MISS?
MISS?
EXCUSE ME!!
HUH?
YOU HAVEN'T PAID FOR YOU ORDER...

MATT!
MATT, WAIT!

PISS OFF.

CHAPTER 6

HANGAPOP. Jr.
HEY!
OH, HEY, YOU'RE BACK!
WHERE'S THE FOOD?
THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANY.

THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANY FOOD? AT MBQ?
WELL, THEY DID. I JUST. I FORGOT TO BUY.
SORRY.
CHRISS, WHAT HAPPENED?
NOTHING. NOTHING HAPPENED.

...
...SORRY, I JUST...
LATER, OKAY? NOT NOW.
SURE.
OPEN
MANGAFOX

...
GRIT
CHRISS, ABOUT THE PORTFOLIO REVIEWS...

YEAH?
!
GOD DAMMIT! STOP IT! IDIOT!
UGH.
.....
SNF
MAN, I'M SORRY. WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO SAY?
CRUMPLE
...WELL, I WAS THINKING--WE ONLY HAVE ABOUT AN HOUR LEFT UNTIL THE REVIEWS, AND WE STILL HAVE TO EAT...
DO YOU WANT TO JUST PACK UP FOR THE DAY? SALES AREN'T GOING THAT GREAT, ANYWAY.

I'LL, UH, TAKE THAT AS A YES.
ARE YOU GUYS LEAVING?
YEAH, TAKING THE REST OF THE DAY OFF.
HEY, ARE YOU OKAY? YOUR EYES ARE KINDA...
I'M A WIMP, SO MY EYES ARE ALWAYS 'KINDA.' DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
ARE YOU STILL COMING TO THE REVIEWS?
YUP, WE'LL SEE YOU THERE! LATER!
HMM.
OH WELL, BACK TO WORK!
BUY!
BUY!
朱雀のスタジオ

WOW.
HEL-LO! HOW ARE...
...YOU...

GLANCE
GLANCE
GLANCE
ASK HIM...NO, YOU ASK HIM.
UM, CAN I TAKE YOUR PICTURE?
NO.
...
AUGH! WHAT A JERK!
TAKE ONE ANYWAY!
NO, WAIT!!
FLASH!
FLASH!

HEE HEE HEE !
HE SAID HE DIDN'T WANT ONE!!
...
DAMMIT...

TACO HUT
!
I MEAN, I UNDERSTAND-- HE WAS UPSET...
HOW IS THAT A GOOD REASON TO TAKE IT OUT ON YOU?!
IT ISN'T, I KNOW.
...
I HOPE HE'S OKAY.

WHILE YOU WERE GONE TODAY, A MANGAPOP EDITOR CAME BY.
REALLY?!! AND, AND?!
HE SAID HE MAY HAVE A JOB FOR ME.
AND THAT THEY'RE NOT LOOKING FOR WRITERS.

I ASKED IF THEY'D BE INTERESTED IN OUR BOOK, BUT HE SAID...
THAT THEY'RE NOT "LOOKING AT ORIGINAL PROPERTIES AT THIS TIME."
...O-OH.
...
W-WELL, THAT'S GREAT!
WOW, WAS IT, LIKE, A REAL JOB OFFER, THEN?
I THINK SO. HE SAID HE WANTS TO TALK TO ME MORE AT THE PORTFOLIO REVIEWS.
WOW, THAT'S AMAZING! NOT THAT I HAD ANY DOUBTS. THEY'D BE FOOLS TO NOT HIRE YOU.
HEH, THANKS.

...
I'M SORRY.
DON'T DO THAT.
?
DON'T PULL THAT 'SURVIVOR GUILT' THING ON ME.
I'M REALLY, HONESTLY HAPPY FOR YOU--YOU SO DESERVE THIS.
I MEAN, IT'S TOO BAD THEY'RE MISSING OUT ON THIS AWESOME WRITER, HERE, BUT IT'S THEIR LOSS, YOU KNOW?
IT SO IS, TOO.
BUT YOU--YOU SO DESERVE THIS BREAK. DON'T YOU DARE FEEL BAD ABOUT IT ON MY ACCOUNT, OKAY?